Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Original) A process for the preparation of monochloroacetic acid from chlorine and acetic acid in the presence of a catalyst by reactive distillation.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the reactive distillation is conducted in a reactive distillation apparatus ~~is used, the apparatus comprising~~ that comprises:

a reactive distillation column;

a cooler unit, and

a reboiler;

wherein the reactive distillation column comprises ~~comprising~~ at least one column internal, which column internal is on one side connected to ~~a~~ the cooler unit and on the other side connected to ~~a~~ the reboiler, and ~~which~~

wherein the reactive distillation apparatus is provided with a first inlet for supplying chlorine, a second inlet for supplying acetic acid, a third inlet for supplying the catalyst, a first outlet for removing the ~~MCA-containing~~ monochloroacetic acid-containing product, and a second outlet for recovering the catalyst, whereby the first inlet and the first outlet are positioned closer to the reboiler than the second and the third inlets, and whereby the second outlet is connected to the cooler unit~~,~~; and

wherein the process ~~comprising the steps of~~ comprises

supplying chlorine via the first inlet,

supplying acetic acid via the second inlet,

supplying the catalyst via the third inlet,

recovering the catalyst via the second outlet, and

removing the ~~MCA-containing~~monochloroacetic acid-containing product via the first outlet.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a catalyst is acetyl chloride.

4. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a applied pressure is at least $0.5 \cdot 10^5$ and at most $10 \cdot 10^5$ Pa.

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~claim 1, wherein a mass ratio of chlorine to acetic acid is at least 0.1 and at most 2.0.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~claim 1, wherein the catalyst is acetic anhydride and a mass ratio of acetic anhydride to acetic acid is at least 0.0001 and at most 0.25.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~claim 1, wherein the column internal is a tray, whereby the number of trays is at least 1 and at most 80.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein the~~ claim 1, wherein a liquid residence time in the reactive distillation column is at least 0.1 and at most 5 hours.

9. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 2 wherein~~claim 2, wherein the second inlet is positioned close to the cooler unit.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~ claim 1, wherein the process is conducted continuously.

11. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The process according to ~~claim 1 wherein~~claim 1, wherein a diluting gas is added, the diluting gas being selected from the group consisting of hydrochloric acid, an inert gas ~~such as nitrogen or helium, or~~and a mixture thereof.

12. (New) The process according to claim 11, wherein the inert gas is selected from the group consisting of nitrogen, helium and mixtures thereof.